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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/595,037	01/09/2006	Stephane Wartel	Q92566	1677
23373 7590 04/09/2008 SUGHRUE MION, PLLC 2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20037				
EXAMINER KAVANAUGH, JOHN T				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3728				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
04/09/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/595,037

Applicant(s)

WARTEL ET AL.

Examiner

/Ted Kavanaugh/

Art Unit

3728

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 March 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 13-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SE-US)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1-9-2008
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The information disclosure statement filed 1/9/2006 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2), which requires a legible copy of each cited foreign patent document; each non-patent literature publication or that portion which caused it to be listed; and all other information or that portion which caused it to be listed. It has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered.

Election/Restrictions

1. The restriction requirement has been withdrawn since it has been determined that embodiments shown in figures 1-9 are not patentably distinct.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

3. Claim 23-24 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

It is not clear how the device is cut in at least one layer of material constituting the tongue and it is not clear how the device is cut in the top half of the tongue. The

figure 10 is supposed to show this but it is not understood how this is possible from the lack of description.

4. Claims 13-24 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 13, lines 9-10, the phrase "the length of the said device (10)...perpendicular to the axial direction of the shoe" is indefinite inasmuch as applicant is defining the device with respect to the shoe but the shoe is not claimed in combination.

It is not clear how claims 23 and 24 further limit the previous claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 13,21,22,23,24 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 2175962 (Kenifick).

Kenifick teaches a device (clasp 14) is integral part of the tongue (20) of the shoe. The device as shown in figures 1 covers the knot of the shoe but a partial loop of the lace can also be placed between the ends of the device and therefore the device is inherently capable of covering the loops. Regarding claims 23 and 24, the device is stapled or sewn (22) to the tongue (see figure 4) and therefore the staple or sewing cuts

in to the layer of the tongue (20). The device has at least two dimensions one of which running perpendicular to the axial direction of the shoe which corresponds to the length of the device.

7. Claims 13-16,18,21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 5042119 (Williams).

Williams teaches a device (170,180; see figure 8) comprising mutual self gripping means (VELCRO), equivalent means for fixing the band to the shoe (apertures 92), a series of orifices (24) for the laces to pass. The device has at least two dimensions one of which running perpendicular to the axial direction of the shoe which corresponds to the length of the device. The device is laced to the tongue and therefore is an integral part of the tongue.

8. Claims 13,14,15 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US 6338186 (Kleinmann).

Kleinmann teaches a device (10,10') in the form of a band arranged to cover the laces (see figure 3), means for fixing the band to the shoe (see col. 5, lines 10-18), and a series of orifices (15,1,6,17,18) for the lace to pass through.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. Claims 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either references: Williams '119 and Kleinmann '186.

Williams and Kleinmann both teach a series of orifices (see the rejection above) except for the specific arrangement of orifices as claimed in claim 17. It would be an obvious design choice to provide the device of either Williams or Kleinmann with any combination of orifices including slits and circular orifices inasmuch as any such combination appears to be merely a design choice. This view is buttressed by applicant disclosure which show a plurality of different combination of orifices (see figures 1-9) and none of which provide a new or unexpected result.

11. Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either reference: Kleinmann '186 or Kenifick '962.

Both patents teach a device as claimed except for the specific dimensions as claimed. It would be an obvious design choice to construct the device with the dimensions as claimed inasmuch as a plurality of different dimensions appear to be suitable and the specific dimensions don't appear to provide any new or unexpected results.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

13. Applicant is duly reminded that a complete response must satisfy the requirements of 37 C.F. R. 1.111, including:

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-“The reply must present arguments pointing out the *specific* distinctions believed to render the claims, including any newly presented claims, patentable over any applied references.”

--“A general allegation that the claims define a patentable invention without specifically pointing out how the language of the claims patentably distinguishes them from the references does not comply with the requirements of this section.”

-Moreover, “The prompt development of a clear issue requires that the replies of the applicant meet the objections to and rejections of the claims. Applicant should also specifically point out the support for any amendments made to the disclosure. See MPEP 2163.06” MPEP 714.02. The “disclosure” includes the claims, the specification and the drawings.

14. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). Other useful information can be obtained at the PTO Home Page at www.uspto.gov.

In order to avoid potential delays, Technology Center 3700 is encouraging FAXing of responses to Office Actions directly into the Center at (571) 273-8300 **(FORMAL FAXES ONLY)**. Please identify Examiner Ted Kavanaugh of Art Unit 3728 at the top of your cover sheet.

Any inquiry concerning the MERITS of this examination from the examiner should be directed to Ted Kavanaugh whose telephone number is (571) 272-4556. The examiner can normally be reached from 6AM - 4PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey Yu can be reached on (571) 272-4562.

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If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (In United States OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Ted Kavanaugh/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3728

TK
April 9, 2008